

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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TAGS: PARM US UK UR
SUBJ: CTB NEGOTIATIONS - SOVIET VIEWS ON PNES

CTB MESSAGE NO. 14

1. IN POST-PLenary CONVERSATION ON OCTOBER 7, SOVIET DELOFF (MALEV) TOLD US DELOFFS (DAVIES, EINHORN, PHELPS) THAT SOVIET DELEGATION HAS BEEN IMPRESSED BY RECENT FIRMNESS OF US POSITION ON PNES. HE SAID IMPRESSION IS BASED ON PRIVATE CONVERSATION BETWEEN PRESIDENT CARTER AND FOMIN GROMYKO IN WASHINGTON AND PRESIDENT'S UNITED NATIONS SPEECH, AS WELL AS ON AMB WARNKE'S STATEMENTS DURING OPENING WEEK OF THIS ROUND.

2. WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING SERIOUSNESS OF US VIEW, MALEV SAID IT WAS NOT DESIRABLE TO ELIMINATE PNES "FOREVER." HOW COULD SOVIET GOVERNMENT SIMPLY ABANDON ALL THE WORK IT HAD DONE ON PNES FOR LAST 15-20 YEARS? IN "15 OR 30 YEARS" PNES MAY BE OF SUCH GREAT VALUE THAT NO COUNTRY WOULD WANT TO GIVE THEM UP. HE SAID THAT POLICIES AND ADMINISTRATIONS CHANGE (CITING REVERSAL OF BOTH US AND
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SOVIET POSITIONS ON PNE QUESTION IN LAST 15 YEARS), AND THAT IT WOULD THEREFORE BE WRONG TO CLOSE OFF OPTIONS FOR THE FUTURE. MALEV THEN MAINTAINED THAT A CTBT SHOULD MAKE SOME PROVISION FOR THIS, SO THAT POSSIBILITY OF CONDUCTING PNES SOMETIME IN FUTURE WOULD BE KEPT OPEN.

3. DELOFF ASKED WHETHER SOVIET DELEGATION HAD ANY SPECIFIC

FORMULATION TO PROPOSE. MALEV REPLIED THAT IN THE PRESENT CLIMATE OF NEGOTIATIONS, WITH THE US SIDE TAKING SUCH AN UNCOMPROMISING POSITION, "WE CANNOT DO THAT." CONVERSATION WAS THEN INTERRUPTED.

4. COMMENT: MALEV, WHO HAS BEEN AN INTERPRETER WITH THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND HAS ALSO SERVED IN POLITICAL ASSIGNMENTS, HAS GENERALLY SEEMED WELL-INFORMED IN CONVERSATIONS WITH US DURING THE MAY BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS AND THE JULY TRILATERALS. WE HAVE NO INDICATION WHETHER HIS REMARKS REFLECT THINKING ELSEWHERE ON SOVIET DELEGATION. MOREOVER, THE IDEA HE RAISED IS VAGUE, AND NOT NECESSARILY CONSISTENT WITH THE TYPE OF "DEFERRAL" OPTION WE WOULD BE PREPARED TO CONSIDER SERIOUSLY (I.E. ONE THAT BANNED PNES FROM THE OUTSET AND ONLY PERMITTED THEM AT SOME FUTURE DATE IF WE WERE PREPARED TO AGREE). NONTHELESS, IT MAY INDICATE THAT SOVIET DELEGATION MAY AT LEAST BE GIVING CONSIDERATION TO POSSIBLE WAYS OUT OF PRESENT IMPASSE. WARNKE

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